COMICO
MIKE W. BARR • ADAM HUGHES • AL VEY
the MAZE AGENCY®
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NITRO
HUGHES & MAGUIRE

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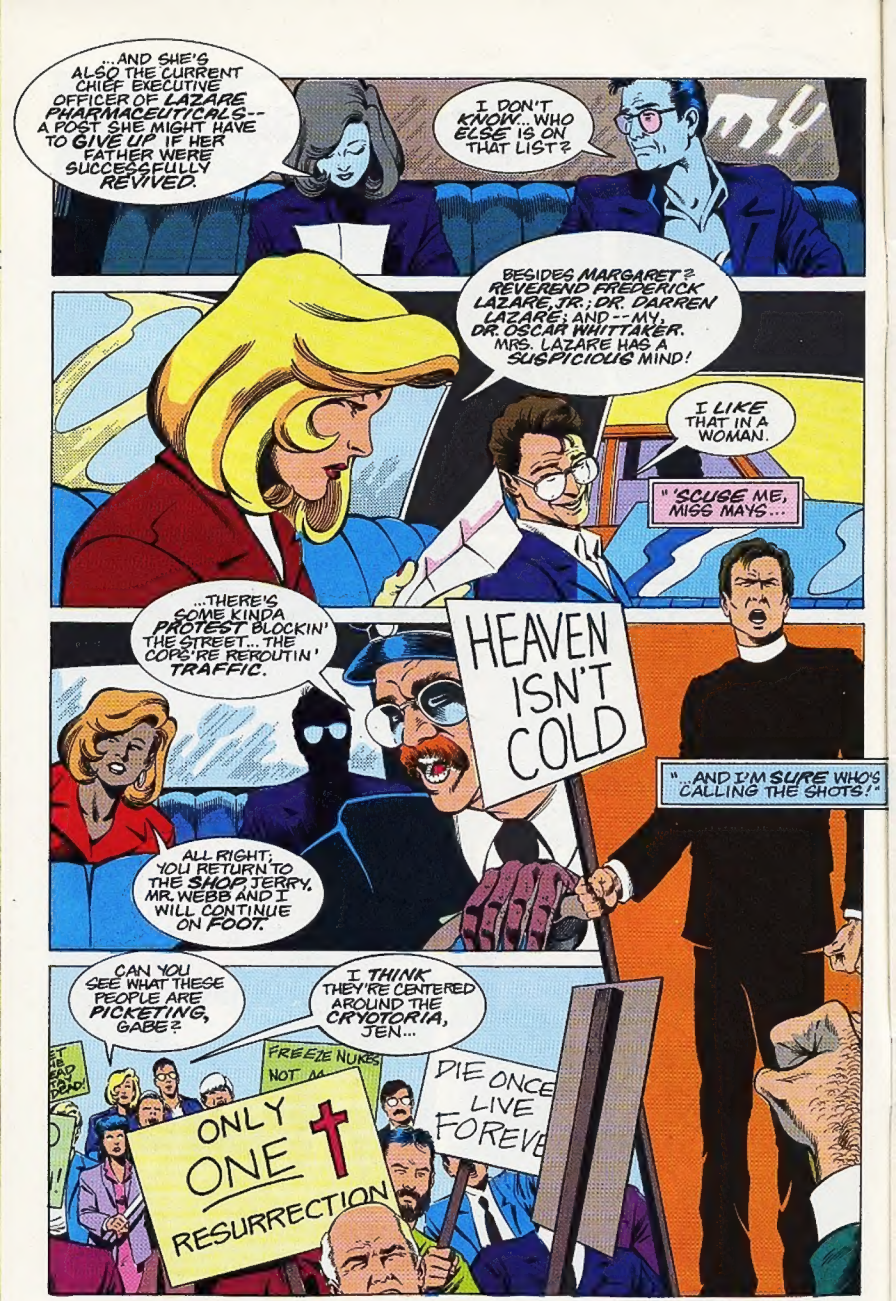
"ONE SIDE, RALPH...
...THIS HAS NEEDED DOING FOR WEEKS, AND TODAY'S THE DAY I BREAK THE ICE!
LEAVE ME ALONE, YOU OLD WITCH--!
I'M GONNA HAVE YOU EVICTED...!
AW, NO--!
BRINNNG
LISTEN, YOU OLD BAG, I'VE TOLD YOU TO LEAVE ME--
YOU'D BETTER STOP MAKING ALL THAT NOISE UP THERE...!

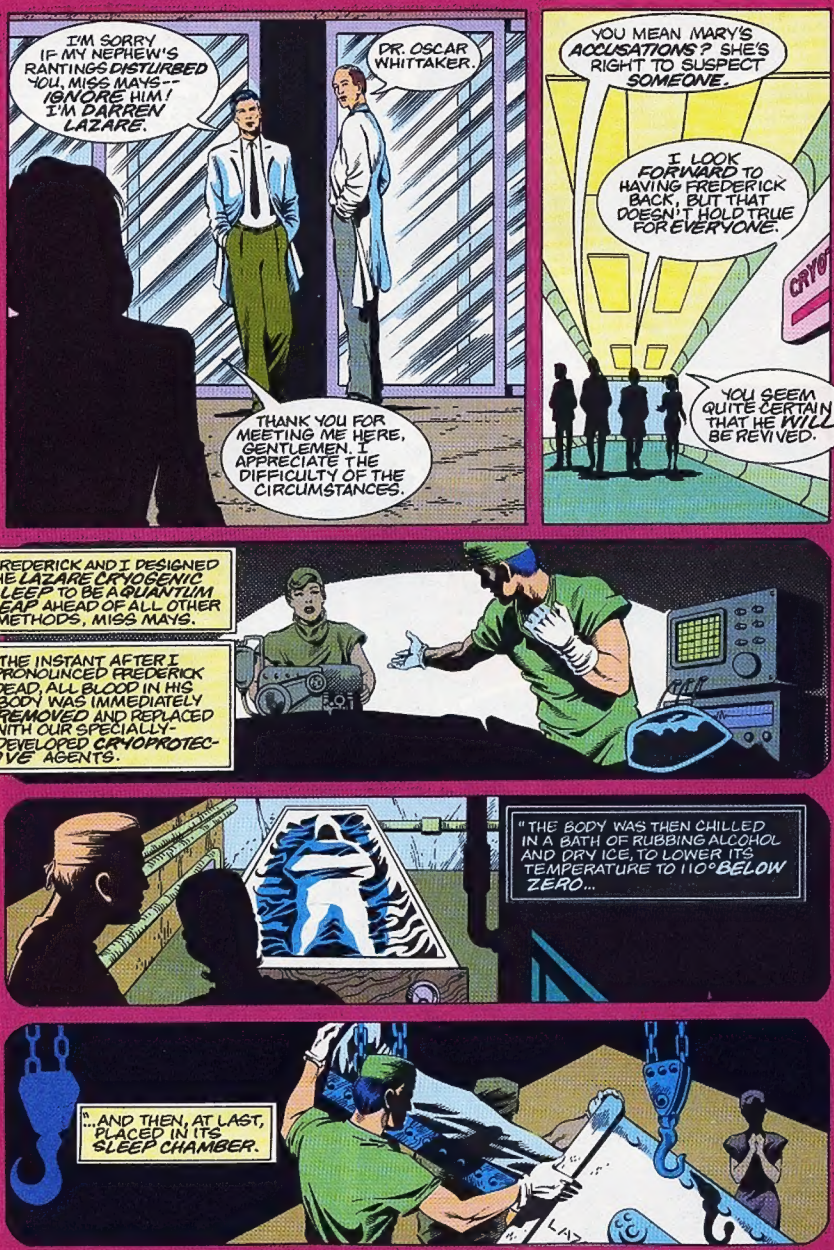
OH, HI, JEN! SORRY, I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY CRAZY DOWNSTAIRS NEIGHBOR...
...YEAH, THE ONE WHO THINKS I OWN THREE GERMAN SHEPHERDS AND WALK AROUND IN FOOTBALL CLEATS; THAT'S HER.
SOUNDS AS THOUGH YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE, GABE...
I ♥ A MYSTERY
"...I'M MEETING A CLIENT THIS AFTERNOON WHOSE STORY I THINK YOU'LL WANT TO HEAR..."
"THIS INTRUDER BYPASSED THE LOCKS AND KNEW THE SECURITY CODE, MISS MAYS...
...BUT FORTUNATELY, I HAD RECENTLY ADDED A FULL-TIME SECURITY PATROL, SO NO DAMAGE WAS DONE.
AND YOU'RE CERTAIN OF THE MOTIVE BEHIND THIS, MRS. LAZARE?
WHAT MOTIVE COULD THERE BE, MISS MAYS, OTHER THAN THE DESTRUCTION OF MY HUSBAND FREDERICK'S BODY...
...WHICH LIES IN THE LAZARE CRYOTORIA FROZEN IN CRYONIC SLEEP?
AREN'T THERE OTHER... CLIENTS IN THE CRYOTORIA?
YES-- BUT THE CAPSULES ARE ALL LABELED, AND NO OTHER CAPSULE SHOWED SIGNS OF TAMPERING.
BESIDES, I CANNOT THINK IT A COINCIDENCE THAT THIS ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE...

NEW YORK TIMES
CURE FOR "LAZARE'S" DISEASE FOUND
DR. WHITTAKER REPORTS CURE FOR FATAL KIDNEY DISEASE
BUSH SAYS NO TO INDICTMENTS
...THE SAME WEEK THAT A CURE FOR THE DISEASE MY HUSBAND DIED FROM IS DISCOVERED!
I SEE. THEN IT IS YOUR INTENTION TO HAVE YOUR HUSBAND RETURNED TO LIFE?
THE TERM IS "REVIVED," MISS MAYS... AND IT IS THE INTENTION OF SOMEONE ELSE TO PREVENT IT.
IF THE INTRUDER DID KNOW THE SECURITY CODE AND HAD KEYS, WHO DOES THAT DESCRIBE, MRS. LAZARE?
I HAVE TO WONDER IF YOUR HUSBAND'S BODY IS IN ANY DANGER, MRS. LAZARE. ANYONE CONNECTED WITH THE CRYOTORIA WOULD KNOW THAT YOU'D POSTED GUARDS.
PERHAPS, MR. WEBB...
EVERYONE ON THIS LIST. MY LOCKSMITH TELLS ME THE LOCKS CANNOT BE CHANGED UNTIL NEXT WEEK.
...BUT I HAVE WAITED YEARS TO SEE MY HUSBAND RESURRECTED--AS THE BIBLICAL MARY SAW JESUS RESURRECTED--AND I TAKE NO CHANCES.
HAVE WE EVER MET, MRS. LAZARE? YOU LOOK FAMILIAR...
PERHAPS YOU ARE THINKING OF MY MOTHER. HER LIKENESS APPEARED ON EVERY PACKAGE MY FATHER'S COMPANY PRODUCED...
...OF MRS. TOLLIVER'S FROZEN FOODS.
"WELL, HERE YOU ARE, MOTHER..."

I THOUGHT I HEARD VOICES IN HERE! YOU DIDN'T TELL ME WE HAD GUESTS!
YOU HAVEN'T GUESTS, MARGARET... I HAVE.
I DON'T THINK WE'VE MET, MS. LAZARE. I'M JENNIFER MAYS.
NO, BUT I'VE SEEN YOUR NAME ON THE ROSTER OF THE NEW YORK BUSINESSWOMEN'S CLUB, MISS MAYS...
...THE SMALL BUSINESSWOMEN'S CLUB.
MOTHER, DO YOU REALLY THINK AN OUTSIDE INVESTIGATOR IS CALLED FOR? THE ADVERSE PUBLICITY WILL --
AS EXECUTOR OF YOUR FATHER'S ESTATE I WILL TAKE WHATEVER MEASURES I DEEM "CALLED FOR," MARGARET.
"YOU REALLY THINK MARGARET LAZARE MIGHT BE BEHIND THE ATTEMPT ON HER OWN FATHER, JEN?"
"SHE'S A MEMBER OF THE CRYOTORIA'S BOARD, GABE, AND HAS ACCESS TO KEYS AND THE SECURITY CODES...
VERY WELL, MOTHER! I ONLY HOPE YOUR DREAM OF REVIVING FATHER DOESN'T BRING DOWN EVERYTHING HE BUILT!


...AND SHE'S ALSO THE CURRENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF LAZARE PHARMACEUTICALS--A POST SHE MIGHT HAVE TO GIVE UP IF HER FATHER WERE SUCCESSFULLY REVIVED.
I DON'T KNOW...WHO ELSE IS ON THAT LIST?
BESIDES MARGARET? REVEREND FREDERICK LAZARE, JR.; DR. DARREN LAZARE; AND--MY, DR. OSCAR WHITTAKER. MRS. LAZARE HAS A SUSPICIOUS MIND!
I LIKE THAT IN A WOMAN.
"SCUSE ME, MISS MAYS...
...THERE'S SOME KINDA PROTEST BLOCKIN' THE STREET...THE COPS'RE REROUTIN' TRAFFIC.
HEAVEN ISN'T COLD
"...AND I'M SURE WHO'S CALLING THE SHOTS!"
ALL RIGHT; YOU RETURN TO THE SHOP, JERRY. MR. WEBB AND I WILL CONTINUE ON FOOT.
CAN YOU SEE WHAT THESE PEOPLE ARE PICKETING, GABE?
I THINK THEY'RE CENTERED AROUND THE CRYOTORIA, JEN...
FREEZE NUKES
DIE ONCE LIVE FOREVE
ONLY ONE RESURRECTION

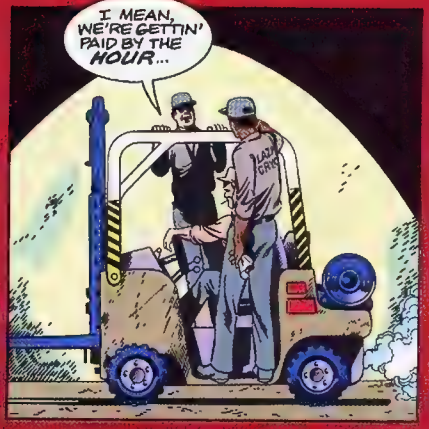
REVEREND LAZARE, I'M JENNIFER MAYS. COULD I TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR FATHER?
MY MOTHER HIRED YOU, DIDN'T SHE? WE HAVE NOTHING TO DISCUSS. MY FATHER'S FATE IS IN GOD'S HANDS.
THEN YOU HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ATTEMPT ON HIS... HIS...
LIFE? MY FATHER IS DEAD, MISS MAYS. "...IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MEN ONCE TO DIE, BUT AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT."
THE BOOK OF HEBREWS, CHAPTER NINE, VERSE TWENTY-SEVEN.
YOU KNOW THE BIBLE?
I USED TO BE A DIVINITY STUDENT; IT COMES WITH THE TERRITORY.
THEN YOU MUST UNDERSTAND MY HATRED OF THIS BUILDING--IT REPRESENTS EVERY ATTEMPT BY MAN TO SCORN GOD'S WILL!
YOU USED TO BE ON THE CRYOTORIA'S BOARD, DIDN'T YOU, REVEREND LAZARE?
I WAS, MISS MAYS. I RESIGNED WHEN I BEGAN THE LORD'S WORK. LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR YOUR SABOTEUR; MY FATHER--MY EARTHLY FATHER--IS DEAD IN MY EYES.
"MISS MAYS...?

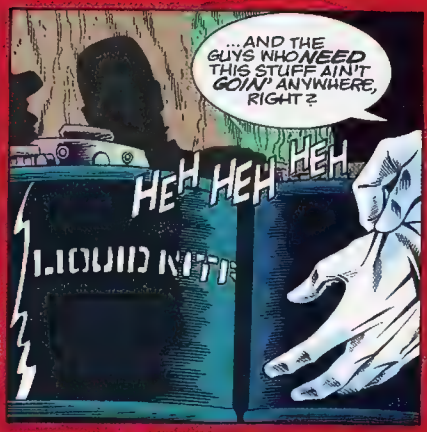

I'M SORRY IF MY NEPHEW'S RANTINGS DISTURBED YOU, MISS MAYS -- IGNORE HIM! I'M DARREN LAZARE.
DR. OSCAR WHITTAKER.
THANK YOU FOR MEETING ME HERE, GENTLEMEN. I APPRECIATE THE DIFFICULTY OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES.
YOU MEAN MARY'S ACCUSATIONS? SHE'S RIGHT TO SUSPECT SOMEONE.
I LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING FREDERICK BACK, BUT THAT DOESN'T HOLD TRUE FOR EVERYONE.
YOU SEEM QUITE CERTAIN THAT HE WILL BE REVIVED.
"FREDERICK AND I DESIGNED THE LAZARE CRYOGENIC SLEEP TO BE A QUANTUM LEAP AHEAD OF ALL OTHER METHODS, MISS MAYS.
"THE INSTANT AFTER I PRONOUNCED FREDERICK DEAD, ALL BLOOD IN HIS BODY WAS IMMEDIATELY REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH OUR SPECIALLY-DEVELOPED CRYOPROTECTIVE AGENTS.
"THE BODY WAS THEN CHILLED IN A BATH OF RUBBING ALCOHOL AND DRY ICE, TO LOWER ITS TEMPERATURE TO 110° BELOW ZERO...
"...AND THEN, AT LAST, PLACED IN ITS SLEEP CHAMBER.

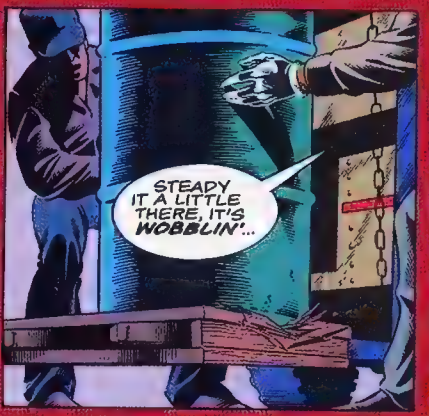
"THEN THE TUBE WAS FILLED WITH LIQUID NITROGEN, MAINTAINING A TEMPERATURE OF -320° FAHRENHEIT.
LIQUID NITRO
THE LIQUID NITROGEN IS TOPPED OFF ONCE A WEEK, AND THE CAPSULE IS TILTED HEAD DOWN, SO IN CASE OF ACCIDENTAL THAWING, THE BRAIN WOULD BE THE LAST ORGAN EXPOSED.
A WISE PRECAUTION-- ESPECIALLY UNDER THE CIRCUM-STANCES.
WHAT ABOUT THE ICE CRYSTAL DAMAGE PROBLEM, DOCTOR?
...BUT THE GENIUS OF THE LAZARE CRYOGENIC SLEEP IS A SPECIAL CRYOPROTECTIVE AGENT THAT DOES NOT EXPAND, BUT MAINTAINS THE ORGANS IN THEIR NATURAL STATE!
I SEE. AND HOW MANY OF YOUR CRYOGENIC SLEEPERS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT BACK, DR. LAZARE?
YOU'VE BEEN DOING YOUR HOMEWORK, MR. WEBB! GOOD! YES, THE PROBLEM WITH ALL OTHER CRYOGENIC METHODS IS IRREPARABLE DAMAGE DONE TO THE BODY FROM EXPANDING ICE CRYSTALS...
ACTUALLY, FREDERICK WILL BE THE FIRST.
I SEE.

THESE SECURITY GUARDS ARE A WISE PRECAUTION, BUT MAZE CAN OFFER YOU A VERY ATTRACTIVE RATE FOR THE SAME SERVICE, DR. LAZARE.
YOU'LL HAVE TO TALK TO MARY ABOUT THAT, MISS MAYS...
...I'VE GOT MY HANDS FULL WITH THE REVIVAL OF FREDERICK. I'VE SO MISSED MY TWIN THAT I WILL TAKE NO CHANCES ON ANYTHING GOING AMISS—
AGGGH!
DARREN!
CAN YOU GIVE ME A HAND WITH HIM?
SURE...
IT—IT'S NOTHING... I'LL BE FINE IN A FEW MINUTES... I JUST NEED A LITTLE REST... IT'S THIS DAMNED HEART OF MINE...
TELL ME, DR. WHITTAKER, IS DR. LAZARE SUFFERING FROM SOME FORM OF "LAZARE'S DISEASE"?
UNFORTUNATELY, NO, MISS MAYS. I COULD TREAT THAT. NO, DARREN'S HEART IS VERY WEAK... THE IDEAL SOLUTION WOULD BE A TRANSPLANT...
...BUT HE HAS A VERY RARE BLOOD TYPE, AND A TISSUE MATCH WOULD ALSO BE TRICKY. HIS BEST BET WOULD BE A DONOR WHO IS A BLOOD RELATIVE...
...BUT THE ONLY PERSON WHO FITS THAT CATEGORY IS HIS BROTHER.

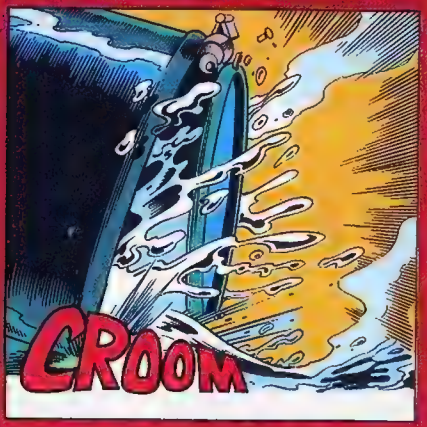
"WELL, THIS IS A FINE KETTLE OF FISH."
"YOU BET. EVERYONE SEEMS TO HAVE A MOTIVE...
...EXCEPT DR. WHITTAKER. THAT AUTOMATICALLY MAKES ME SUSPECT HIM.
MY, HOW SCIENTIFIC. HOW ABOUT MARY LAZARE?
WHAT ABOUT HER?
PERHAPS SHE'S LYING ABOUT HAVING THE LOCKS CHANGED, TO DISTRIBUTE SUSPICION.
MAYBE SHE'S GROWN TIRED OF BEARING HER HUSBAND'S TORCH... IT MUST BE AWFULLY DIFFICULT, LIVING ALL THOSE YEARS ALONE.
SPEAKING OF BEING ALONE, WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE DINNER TONIGHT?
THANK YOU, BUT I HAVE OTHER PLANS. WHAT WILL YOU DO?
OH, I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING.
"LET'S GET A MOVE ON, YOU GUYS."
"WHAT'S THE RUSH, CHIEF...?
LAZARE CRYOTORIA


I MEAN, WE'RE GETTIN' PAID BY THE HOUR...


...AND THE GUYS WHO NEED THIS STUFF AIN'T GOIN' ANYWHERE, RIGHT?
HEH HEH HEH


STEADY IT A LITTLE THERE, IT'S WOBBLIN'...

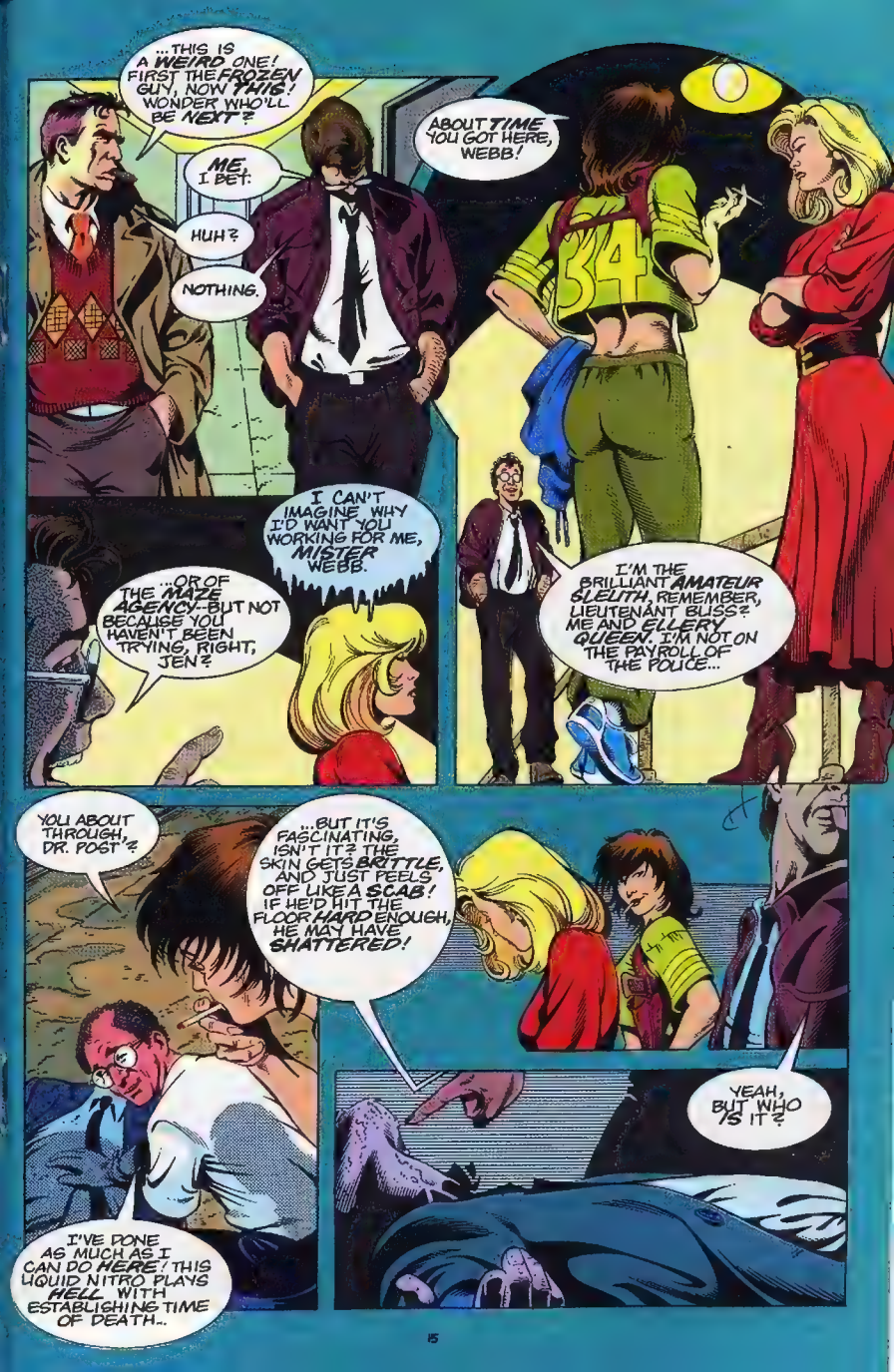
LOOK OUT--!

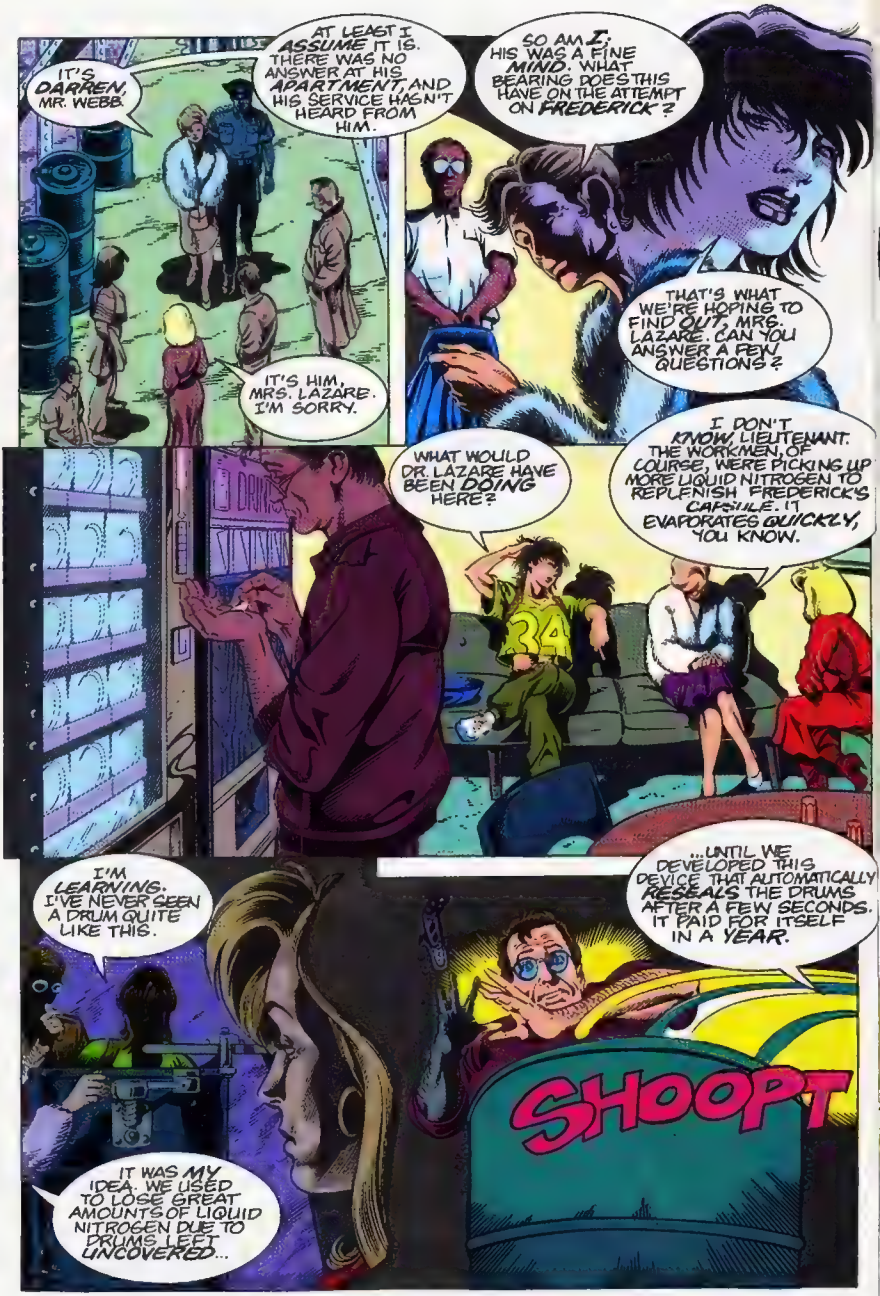

CROOM

JEEZ--!
LOOK AT THAT...!

I'M SORRY, BUT I TAKE BEING A DENTAL HYGIENIST SERIOUSLY, AND I DON'T THINK IT'S ANYTHING TO MAKE FUN OF.
I WASN'T MAKING FUN OF YOUR JOB, BETTY, I JUST TOLD YOU NOT TO RINSE AND SPIT WITH THE WINE.
IT WAS A JOKE, ALBEIT A PRETTY STUPID ONE.
MY THERAPIST SAYS A LOT OF HOSTILITY IS HIDDEN BEHIND HUMOR.
MAYBE YOUR THERAPIST DOESN'T HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR.
I THINK HE'S VERY FUNNY.
THEN MAYBE YOU SHOULD BE DATING HIM.
LOOK, I'M SORRY IT DIDN'T WORK OUT. HAVE A NICE LIFE.
I--I'M GOING TO CALL MY THERAPIST ABOUT THIS--!

BRINNG
AW, NO...!
LOOK, BETTY, IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD TO--
BETTY? WHO'S BETTY?
APRIL
OH, HI, JEN... HOW ARE YOU?
B-DUH
DUNCE
B-DUH
THEN YOU CAN EXPLAIN WHO BETTY IS...!
NEVER MIND ABOUT THAT! YOU'D BETTER GET TO THE LAZARE FACTORY IN BAY RIDGE, BROOKLYN, RIGHT AWAY!
SIGH
LOOK, OFFICER, I TELL YOU THEY WANT ME IN THERE! MY NAME IS WEBB...
CORONER
"THAT YOU, PROFESSOR...?


...THIS IS A WEIRD ONE! FIRST THE FROZEN GUY, NOW THIS! WONDER WHO'LL BE NEXT?
ME, I BET.
HUH?
NOTHING.
ABOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE, WEBB!
I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY I'D WANT YOU WORKING FOR ME, MISTER WEBB.
...OR OF THE MAZE AGENCY--BUT NOT BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TRYING, RIGHT, JEN?
I'M THE BRILLIANT AMATEUR SLEUTH, REMEMBER, LIEUTENANT BLISS? ME AND ELLERY QUEEN. I'M NOT ON THE PAYROLL OF THE POLICE...
YOU ABOUT THROUGH, DR. POST?
...BUT IT'S FA...SCINATING, ISN'T IT? THE SKIN GETS BRITTLE, AND JUST PEELS OFF LIKE A SCAB! IF HE'D HIT THE FLOOR HARD ENOUGH, HE MAY HAVE SHATTERED!
YEAH, BUT WHO IS IT?
I'VE DONE AS MUCH AS I CAN DO HERE! THIS LIQUID NITRO PLAYS HELL WITH ESTABLISHING TIME OF DEATH..


IT'S DARREN, MR. WEBB.
AT LEAST I ASSUME IT IS. THERE WAS NO ANSWER AT HIS APARTMENT, AND HIS SERVICE HASN'T HEARD FROM HIM.
IT'S HIM, MRS. LAZARE. I'M SORRY.
SO AM I. HIS WAS A FINE MIND. WHAT BEARING DOES THIS HAVE ON THE ATTEMPT ON FREDERICK?
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HOPING TO FIND OUT, MRS. LAZARE. CAN YOU ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS?
WHAT WOULD DR. LAZARE HAVE BEEN DOING HERE?
I DON'T KNOW, LIEUTENANT. THE WORKMEN, OF COURSE, WERE PICKING UP MORE LIQUID NITROGEN TO REPLENISH FREDERICK'S CAPSULE. IT EVAPORATES QUICKLY, YOU KNOW.
I'M LEARNING. I'VE NEVER SEEN A DRUM QUITE LIKE THIS.
IT WAS MY IDEA. WE USED TO LOSE GREAT AMOUNTS OF LIQUID NITROGEN DUE TO DRUMS LEFT UNCOVERED...
...UNTIL WE DEVELOPED THIS DEVICE THAT AUTOMATICALLY RESEALS THE DRUMS AFTER A FEW SECONDS. IT PAID FOR ITSELF IN A YEAR.
SHOOPT

LIEUTENANT, I'VE GOT SOMETHIN' YOU'LL WANNA SEE.
RIGHT WITH YOU, SIMONS. EXCUSE ME, MRS. LAZARE...
THE LOCK ON THE DOOR TO THIS STOREROOM WAS BROKEN, AND THERE'S A BOTTLE OF ACID MISSING.
"IS THERE A CONNECTION TO THE MURDER?"
WELL, WE FOUND THIS IN THE BOTTOM A THE SAME DRUM THAT DR. LAZARE WAS PACKED AWAY IN...!
MRS. LAZARE, WOULD ACID, MIXED WITH THE LIQUID NITROGEN, HAVE DAMAGED YOUR HUSBAND'S BODY?
I BELIEVE IT WOULD, LIEUTENANT -- IF THE CONCENTRATION WERE HIGH ENOUGH!
IT ALL FITS, LIEUTENANT. SOMEONE WAS MIXING ACID WITH THE LIQUID NITROGEN, AND GOT CAUGHT BY DR. LAZARE. THEN THE KILLER SEALED HIM IN THE DRUM.
GOOD THINKING, JEN.

WHY, THANK YOU, MISTER WEBB.
YOU'D BETTER HAVE THOSE OTHER DRUMS CHECKED BEFORE YOU USE THEM, MRS. LAZARE, AND I'D LIKE THE NAMES OF EVERYONE WHO HAS KEYS TO THIS PLACE.
CERTAINLY, LIEUTENANT.
"WHOEVER GOT INTO THE WAREHOUSE HAD THE RIGHT KEYS AND KNEW THE SECURITY CODES, JUST LIKE AT THE CRYOTERIA."
"THAT'S CRYOTORIA, LIEUTENANT."
THANK YOU, DR. WHITTAKER. NOW, REVEREND LAZARE AND MS. LAZARE, I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHERE YOU TWO WERE TONIGHT--
I RESENT YOUR IMPLICATION, BUT EVEN IF I WERE GUILTY, WHAT OF IT? MY FATHER'S "REVIVAL" IS AN AFFRONT TO THE LAWS OF GOD.
LOOKS LIKE THERE'S NO SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE HERE.
I RESENT IT, TOO! OF COURSE I HAVE A MOTIVE! IF YOU'D EARNED WHAT I HAVE, WOULD YOU WANT TO BE REPLACED BY A...A... LIVING POPSICLE?
AMEN.

JEN, WE HAVE TO TALK.
DO WE HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY?
LT. ROBERTA BL
HOMICIDE
IT WAS YOUR IDEA FOR US TO DATE "OTHER PEOPLE." YOU DO IT!
YES, BUT...
YOU DIDN'T THINK I'D DO IT, DID YOU? YOU'RE JEALOUS!
WELL, I MOST CERTAINLY AM NOT...!
WOULD IT HELP IF I SAID I HAD THE WORST TIME OF MY LIFE?
IT MIGHT...!
OH, HERE YOU TWO ARE!
EITHER THE DAUGHTER OR THE SON COULD'VE KILLED LAZARE! NEITHER OF THEM CAN ACCOUNT FOR EVERY MINUTE OF THEIR TIME THIS EVENING!
VERY FEW PEOPLE CAN, LIEUTENANT. BUT I HAVE ANOTHER LEAD YOU MIGHT FIND INTERESTING...

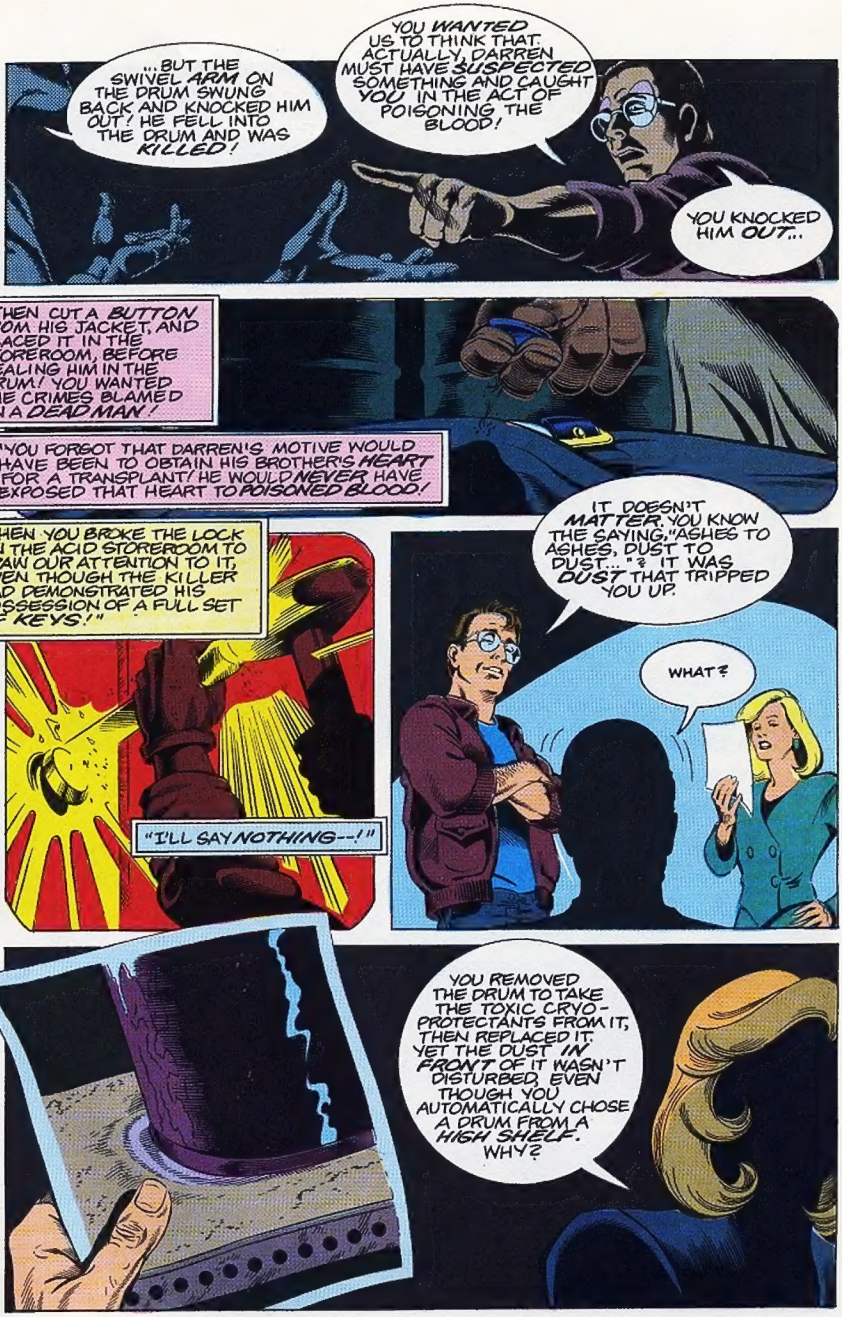
...YEARS AGO, MRS. LAZARE--THEN MARY TOLLIVER--AND DR. WHITTAKER WERE QUITE AN ITEM.
THEN MRS. LAZARE MET HER HUSBAND-TO-BE, AND DR. WHITTAKER WAS LEFT OUT IN THE COLD.
IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.
THEY EVEN APPLIED FOR A MARRIAGE LICENSE, EH? HMMM...
THEN YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DELAY THE OPERATION UNTIL WE'VE FOUND THE KILLER, MRS. LAZARE?
ARE YOU SURE YOU'VE THOUGHT THIS THROUGH? EVEN IF THE OPERATION IS A SUCCESS, YOUR HUSBAND WON'T HAVE AGED A DAY, AND YOU--
NO, MISS MAYS. I WILL NOT DENY THE WORLD MY HUSBAND'S PRESENCE ONE MOMENT LONGER.
AND I HAVE--CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN A DAY. THAT MAY BE A CONSIDERATION FOR OTHER WOMEN...
BUT IT WAS OUR SOULS THAT FELL IN LOVE, MISS MAYS, NOT JUST OUR BODIES... AND THAT KIND OF LOVE DOES NOT RECOGNIZE AGE.
ERAL
ITAL
MERGENCY
SSIONAL
UILDING

DAMN. IF THIS FAILS, OUR STOCK WILL DROP LIKE A ROCK.
THE CRYOPROTECTANTS HAVE BEEN FLUSHED FROM HIS SYSTEM AND HIS BLOOD REPLACED, MARY-- NOW TO STIMULATE THE HEART...
"...THEN, WHEN HE IS STABLE, I'LL PERFORM THE OPERATION.
CRZ
SOMETHING'S WRONG. HE ISN'T RESPONDING...
WHAT?

...I'LL TRY MASSAGING THE HEART BY HAND...
HURRY! HURRY!
I'M SORRY, MARY...
REFREEZE HIM! QUICKLY!
MARY... HE'S GONE.
NO!
THIS IS ONE FOR THE BOOKS-- AN AUTOPSY ON A MAN WHO'S BEEN DEAD TWENTY YEARS!
IT IS FINISHED, MARGARET.
SO HE'S FINALLY GONE...
HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE, LOOT! THE BLOOD PUMPED BACK INTO HIS BODY WAS POISONED-- WITH TOXIC CRYOPROTECTANTS.
WITH WHAT, POST?
THE FLUID PUMPED INTO BODIES TO BE FROZEN AFTER THE BLOOD'S DRAINED OUT! MOST OF THE OLD-STYLE PROTECTANTS ARE POISONOUS!
THE ENTIRE FROZEN STORE OF BLOOD WAS CONTAMINATED-- BEFORE THE OPERATION!
"SIMONS, GET MRS. LAZARE! I DON'T CARE HOW BROKEN UP SHE IS."

WE DO HAVE SOME OF THE OLD TOXIC CRYOPROTECTANTS, LIEUTENANT. I BELIEVE THEY'RE HERE...
...IN THIS STOREROOM. BUT IT HASN'T BEEN OPENED FOR MONTHS. THE BLOOD FOR FREDERICK'S OPERATION WAS KEPT IN THE FREEZER, NEXT DOOR.
NO SIGNS A TAMPERING WITH THE LOCKS, HERE OR NEXT DOOR, LIEUTENANT. IF ANYBODY OPENED THIS, THEY HAD A KEY.
THERE--! ON THE FLOOR...
...THE MICE AROUND HERE HAVE PRETTY BIG FEET! YOU HAVE A CAMERA, LIEUTENANT?
"SIMONS, GET THE CAMERA FROM THE CAR.
DUST IS SO LIGHT, IT'LL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL THE SHOE SIZE OF WHOEVER MADE THESE...
CRYO-PROTECTANTS
IT MAY BE IMPORTANT ANYWAY, LIEUTENANT...
LOOK! THIS ONE'S BEEN MOVED RECENTLY-- THE ONLY ONE THAT HAS -- AND PUT BACK, ALMOST IN THE SAME SPOT!
THUNNKT
YOU HEAR THAT? IT'S NOT FULL.

THESE WERE ALL FULL WHEN THEY WERE PLACED HERE.
NONE OF THE OTHERS HAS BEEN DISTURBED...
AND HERE'S SOMETHING ELSE --A BUTTON.
THAT TEARS IT! THIS WHOLE SCENE SHOWS WHO'S BEHIND ALL THIS...
...BUT THERE'S NO PROOF.
THERE ARE WAYS AROUND THAT, ACE.
YOU KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE.
I "KNOW" NO SUCH THING, MISS MAYS.
WELL, EVERYONE HAD EXCELLENT REASONS FOR WANTING FREDERICK LAZARE PERMANENTLY DEAD, WHETHER THEY ADMITTED IT OR NOT.
"WHAT OF IT?"
FIRST, YOU TRIED TO... ER... "DEFROST" FREDERICK LAZARE'S BODY, BUT YOU WERE NEARLY CAUGHT BECAUSE YOU SIMPLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE GUARDS. YOU'D HAVE TO BE MORE SUBTLE.
I WOULD, WOULD I?
YES. SO YOU POISONED THE BLOOD TO BE USED IN LAZARE'S REVIVAL, KNOWING IT WOULD POISON HIS VERY CELLS--HE COULD NEVER BE REVIVED!
"NO, DARREN DID THAT! THEN HE TRIED TO MIX ACID INTO THE LIQUID NITROGEN...


...BUT THE SWIVEL ARM ON THE DRUM SWUNG BACK AND KNOCKED HIM OUT! HE FELL INTO THE DRUM AND WAS KILLED!
YOU WANTED US TO THINK THAT. ACTUALLY, DARREN MUST HAVE SUSPECTED SOMETHING AND CAUGHT YOU IN THE ACT OF POISONING THE BLOOD!
YOU KNOCKED HIM OUT...
"...THEN CUT A BUTTON FROM HIS JACKET, AND PLACED IT IN THE STOREROOM, BEFORE SEALING HIM IN THE DRUM! YOU WANTED THE CRIMES BLAMED ON A DEAD MAN!
"YOU FORGOT THAT DARREN'S MOTIVE WOULD HAVE BEEN TO OBTAIN HIS BROTHER'S HEART FOR A TRANSPLANT! HE WOULD NEVER HAVE EXPOSED THAT HEART TO POISONED BLOOD!
"THEN YOU BROKE THE LOCK ON THE ACID STOREROOM TO DRAW OUR ATTENTION TO IT, EVEN THOUGH THE KILLER HAD DEMONSTRATED HIS POSSESSION OF A FULL SET OF KEYS!"
"I'LL SAY NOTHING--!"
IT DOESN'T MATTER. YOU KNOW THE SAYING, "ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST..."? IT WAS DUST THAT TRIPPED YOU UP.
WHAT?
YOU REMOVED THE DRUM TO TAKE THE TOXIC CRYO-PROTECTANTS FROM IT, THEN REPLACED IT. YET THE DUST IN FRONT OF IT WASN'T DISTURBED, EVEN THOUGH YOU AUTOMATICALLY CHOSE A DRUM FROM A HIGH SHELF. WHY?

BECAUSE YOU'RE THE TALLEST SUSPECT, DR. WHITTAKER.
YOU CAN'T PROVE A THING!
"THEY DON'T NEED TO PROVE IT TO ME, OSCAR...
...I BELIEVE IT.
MARY, NO...!
CRAKKT
YOUR LOVE WAS WASTED ON A FROZEN CORPSE...! I DID IT TO BRING US TOGETHER AGAIN...!
MARY, PLEASE...!
I'M VERY SORRY IT DIDN'T WORK OUT, MRS. LAZARE. MAY I SAY, YOU SEEM TO BE TAKING IT VERY WELL...
I HAVE REALIZED THAT MY FREDERICK IS NOT YET LOST TO ME, MISS MAYS...
...I STILL POSSESS FROZEN SAMPLES OF HIS SPERM AND BONE MARROW...
...SOMEDAY SOON, I AM QUITE CERTAIN I CAN HAVE HIM CLONED.
CATS
Walt Disney's WORLD on ICE
DOROTHY HAMILL
MARCH 7-15
END

from the desk of
Jennifer Mays

MAZE AGENTS

1547 DeKalb St., Norristown, Pa 19401

Editor's Note: Two errors crept into issue #3's lettercol, sneaking past the scrutiny of Gabe Webb's watchful magnifying glass: the creator of Charlie Chan was Earl Derr Biggers, not Bigger; and the issue of *Detective Comics* referred to was issue #488, not #484. Mike W. Barr and I apologize for these goofs. And now, let's look at our letters on *The MAZE Agency* #1: — Michael Eury

To the Editor:

Bravo! to all involved in *The MAZE Agency*. This is an exceedingly fun book and something the comic-book world has needed for a long time — a "fair" mystery title.

Mike Barr, whose work I have enjoyed on other titles, has come through with a real winner. Jennifer Mays is a tough and intelligent businesswoman who looks and acts the part. I love comic books, but get very tired of all heroines dressing like expensive hookers. It's a cliché that has worn very thin. I'm willing to believe this woman is smarter than the local criminals.

Gabriel Webb is also an atypical comic-book hero, with his glasses and lack of mythic muscles. Neither hero used an uzi to make a point or leaped tall buildings in a single bound. They didn't even do it with a running start. These people act like *people*, and there's probably no better compliment for a writer than that.

The art by Adam Hughes and Rick Magyar is rich and exciting. I suspect these two gentlemen will be among the next big "hot artist" names in the industry.

If the rest of the series lives up to issue #1, "The Adventures of the Rogue's Gallery," then *The MAZE Agency* is destined to be a hit.

Conrad Haynes
Milwaukee, OR

— Conrad Haynes is the creator of Professor Harry Bishop, an amateur sleuth whose exploits have been chronicled in the novels *Bishop's Gambit, Declined,* and *Perpetual Check*, available from Bantam. — MWB

Editor:

Congratulations are in order. *The MAZE Agency* is exactly the kind of comic the medium needed. It is good, quality detective fiction. "The Adventure of the Rogue's Gallery" was an entertaining mystery yarn. I will be looking forward to reading stories like this every month. Mike W. Barr has created two very interesting characters in Jennifer and Gabriel.

Adam Hughes's **[and Rick Magyar's! — MWB]** art was quite good. I was under the impression that Alan Davis was supposed to illustrate this title, though. What happened? The book is still very well done.

With the shortage of quality detective work in print, on TV, and in comics, *The MAZE Agency* is a breath of fresh air. Thank you for your time, and keep up the good work.

Kevin Sharp
Palo Alto, CA

— Alan Davis designed the characters and drew the pilot story (published only in a very limited edition and not for sale), but Adam and Rick are our artists, Kevin, and we couldn't be happier. — MWB

In the MAZE: **Norma McQuaid of Oceanside, CA, expects us to run multi-part stories, but confesses, "I really enjoy the one-story issues best." What do the rest of you say on this?**

Dear Mr. Eury:

Though I'm a bigger fan of adventure/detective stories such as The Shadow (as handled by Walter Gibson) and other such characters, I got a kick out of "The Adventure of the Rogue's Gallery." Mike Barr's one of my favorites, and he mentioned quite a few authors I've been thinking of catching up on — Ellery Queen, Rex Stout, etc. — but I think he missed a few: Agatha Christie, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett.

Nice artwork **[by Hughes and Magyar! — MWB]**, and although the lettering is something that you shouldn't notice, Deborah Marks's use of the quotation marks in captions was a nice idea; distracts much less from the story, once you get over how much it doesn't distract from the story.

I don't care much for comics readers who can't read anything that isn't told in a comics format, so how about printing a few *MAZE Agency* stories in prose?

Best with the new title — '89 is the Year of the MAZE.

Rich Harvey
Medford, NJ

— *MAZE* stories in prose? Hmmmm. — MWB

BACKSTORY

The fictional possibilities in cryogenics have been exploited by many writers, and doubtless will be by many more. I first used the theme in *Batman and the Outsiders* #6 and #7, back in 1984, going so far as to call *BATO* #6 "Death Warmed Over!"

Readers wishing to learn more about the cold (!) facts should try to find *The Prospect of Immortality* by Robert C.W. Ettinger (1964 from Doubleday & Co., 1966 paperback from Macfadden-Bartell), and *Here Comes Immortality* by Jerome Tuccille (Stein & Day, 1973). Both of these books are probably out of print; sorry. Ettinger's book is more fact-oriented, while Tuccile's is more concerned with the sociological ramifications, and is also written in a wise-ass style that may put some readers off (like yours truly). An excellent article on the subject, "Cold Storage" by Shawna Vogel, appeared in *Discover* magazine in February, 1988.

But if you even *mention* the subject in either Disneyland or Walt Disney World, they'll throw you out on your mouse ears.

— Mike W. Barr